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Nancy Hanks, the book proclaims "Abraham Lincoln was also favored by prenatal preparation for his great earthly mission" (p. 28), proof of which is submitted mainly in references to illustrations of prenatal influence in bible history. One wonders where the author secured his evidence of the ideal environment in which Nancy Hanks moved during the period of her expectancy. "No where in history can there be found the story of a human life which more clearly and effectively illustrates the potency of prenatal influence than does that of Abraham Lincoln and his mother. There never has been, nor will there ever be, another Abraham Lincoln" (p. 31). Are these the calm conclusions of a judicious-minded historian?

Ignoring all evidence of Lincoln's religious doubts, he portrays a consistent devotee of orthodox religion, proclaiming, often upon clearly insufficient evidence, Lincoln's undoubted belief in the deity of Christ, in the doctrine of the atonement, and in all the miracles of the new testament. Colonel Jaques' testimony in 1897 to his conversion of Lincoln nearly fifty years before is quoted with uncritical comment. "There is every reason for giving this remarkable story unquestioning credence" (p. 397). The proslavery attitude of the church is indicated as the only insuperable obstacle to Lincoln's application for church membership. The story that Lincoln after the disaster of Bull Run travelled in disguise to the home of Henry Ward Beecher to seek comfort in the prayers of that great divine is defended on the general evidence of Lincoln's faith in prayer and of his personal regard for Beecher. So picking and culling, the octogenarian student and reminiscencer with Calvinistic fortitude builds up his picture of the predestined saviour of the union and perfect model for mankind. The volume, sadly lacking in synthesis, is not unlike the patch-work quilt which according to the story related by the author was miraculously transported in answer to Lincoln's prayer from a Connecticut mother's arms to the cot of her wounded son in North Carolina (pp. 544-548). So uncritical is the method of the author and the spirit of the volume that the reader involuntarily finds himself inclined to challenge even such conclusions as can stand the test of historical criticism.

ARTHUR C. COLE

Report of the librarian of congress and report of the superintendent of the library building and grounds. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1917. (Washington: Government printing office, 1917. 223 p. \$.40)

Librarian Putnam's latest report is restricted by "the economic situation" to the bare record of the library's operations "with only such explanations and comments as are needed to indicate their significance."

The single exception relates to manuscript accessions, these "being largely the result of gift." The place of honor among these papers is accorded those pertaining to the American revolution, prepared by Charles Thompson, secretary of the continental congress, supplementing Thompson's "Journals," which in 1903 found place in the state department library. After ten years' negotiations these valuable personal papers have finally found place in our great governmental repository. They include notes on debates, and letters from Franklin, Dickinson, Jay, Jefferson, Robert and Gouverneur Morris, Madison, and Monroe.

The librarian regretfully announces that the publication of the *Journals of the continental congress*, 23 volumes of which have appeared, was suspended in 1914. As the record of the foundation of the American state, and as an explanation of our subsequent governmental development, all students of history will agree with Mr. Hunt, chief of the manuscript division, that "there can be no doubt as to the value of this publication."

The retirement of Chief Sonneck of the music division is deplored, for Mr. Sonneck's fifteen years of constructive service have resulted in a collection of 740,000 musical compositions, 35,000 contributions to the literature of music, and 20,000 items of musical instruction, all bearing upon music in America.

The call to military service and the demands of new bureaus and commissions have interfered with the workings of the library. The library met the needs of the bureau of citizenship of the state department by loaning the services of Mr. Hunt.

Without entering into details of the finances of the library, we may gather from them several interesting items.

In forty-six years, the total of entries in the copyright office has been 3,043,835. During the last fiscal year, 18,177 volumes have been transferred to the library from the copyright office; 5,081 books have been deposited in governmental libraries in the District; and 57,215 articles have been returned to copyright claimants, including 15,464 books, 398 photographs, 16,963 prints, 11,326 periodicals, 3,415 musical compositions, and 9,649 films.

The library of congress at the close of the fiscal year included: books, 2,537,922, a year's gain of 85,948; maps and charts (pieces), 158,480, a year's gain of 4,280; music (volumes and pieces), 795,749, a year's gain of 25,501; prints (pieces), 397,945, a year's gain of 5,040.

Of the accessions of books and pamphlets during the past year, 17,348 were by purchase, 12,100 were by gift. The rest were chiefly donated by state and local governments, by copyright and by transfer from

government libraries, home and foreign. The war necessarily reduced the accessions from abroad from 14,850 to 9,619.

To facilitate the continued receipt of German and Austrian material, Mr. Koch, chief of the order division, spent several months abroad. His fortunate presence in London resulted in the gift of a large and valuable collection of "Whistleriana" by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pennell, the artist's biographers. The collection, contained in fourteen cases, includes many of Whistler's drawings and paintings, hundreds of letters to and from distinguished people, and books on the arts in which Whistler was preëminent. Several valuable specimens of fifteenth century printing were also acquired.

Recent acquisitions have added materially to the library's collection of foreign law material, material in which most of our state libraries are weak.

The report includes an article by Julean Arnold, American commercial attaché to China and Japan, with the suggestive title, "Get the map habit," a plea for the better understanding of the countries whose trade we solicit.

The indebtedness of the large libraries of the country to the library of congress for copies of the printed catalog cards of our great national library, made accessible by purchase soon after Mr. Putnam entered upon his duties as librarian, cannot better be measured than by the fact that the number of subscribers for these cards is 2,559, an increase of 189 since 1916. The titles of cards represented in stock number about 735,000.

The legislative reference of the library is fast growing. In 1915, when the service was new, it registered 269 inquiries; in 1916, 756; in 1917, 1,280. Of the 1,280, 471 relate to law; 809 relate to economics, statistics, and history. The inquiries came mainly from congressmen, and followed closely the prevailing subjects of general interest before congress, most of them covering a wide range of questions growing out of the war. It may reasonably be anticipated that this relatively new service will be greatly extended, and that the libraries and historical associations of the country will in the near future find it the great central source of information on all questions of public interest.

JOHNSON BRIGHAM

Handbook of manuscripts in the library of congress. (Washington: Government printing office, 1918. 750 p. \$.65)

The students and writers of American history will be glad to make the acquaintance of this detailed index of the richest manuscript collection in this country. The handbook is practically a subject catalog of the collections arranged alphabetically and designed "to present the